Book 2

The Missing Case

Chapters

Chapter 1: Assembly

Chapter 2: French

Chapter 3: Attendance

Chapter 4: The Mystery

Chapter 5: Following Friends

Chapter 6: Dark Dreams

Chapter 7: Teacher Troubles

Chapter 1

Assembly

Just like any school, assemblies are held. Assemblies about the school are held. Assemblies about world news are held. Assemblies spreading awareness is held. This is also in the case in the real world, isn't it?

It is that way in Open Book School.

A few days after the school's opening, students lined up in the same hall their parents picked them up in. Not only is the hall used for assemblies and parents' pick up, but also for sparring classes and sometimes PE (when strong weather occurs).

Chit-chats came about. The volume was as high as ever. Some students even sounded like they were screaming while talking. The talks mostly came from Class 1 and Class 2, though. As for Class 3 and Class 4, well, those classes are fairly cold and shut-off. Class 3 is much more active than Class 4.

Finally, the conversations get cut off thanks to a man in a suit. He was wearing a smooth jacket, has clear-cut brown hair, and was wearing a fancy tie. He means business. Not only to the teachers and other staff, but to the students too.

"Students", a dimming voice jolted out.

It was the man.

The students' mouths instantly shut upon the man's calling. He didn't even say a sentence, yet, he seemed to have commanded the students to close their lips.

However, this didn't stop two boys. One was looked like he came from the 80's, the other looked like a jock from a cliche high-school movie.

Despite their silly appearances, they've been well-known to be troublemakers. Many say that they've started a "gang" in the school, though it's not confirmed to be true.

"Hello?", the man called. He tilted his head to the still-talking boys, who stopped talking.

"I'm glad you're not deaf", the man smiled. He turned his attention away to everyone else.

The boys didn't look so intimidated.

"Good morning, students", the man greeted.

"Good morning, Mr. Gregory", the students greeted back.

Bruno, a young boy reigning from another branch of the school, was confused. *What's the big deal with this guy? He doesn't even look like he's working in the school!* He was hesitant to ask anyone, as he was in the front of the line, meaning he had to turn back to ask someone.

"It seems like today's the day… well… not exactly, of course! Yes! Your head-teacher, not coming in the first few days of the school!", the man said.

It clicked to Bruno. That man in the suit? He **is** the head honcho!

Bruno was sweating, while the man in front of him was the head-teacher he was fearing about. What if he saw Bruno spiraling out of fear? He **was** standing in front of Mr. Greg's eyesight.

In the thought of all that, Bruno was dripping out sweat. It's as if he's a lizard shedding his skin. His hair was submerged in sweat. His hands were tingling. All he smelled was himself, not even the other boy's perfume. It's strange that nobody surrounding him even noticed his wet clothing.

However, that didn't matter to Greg. He was only focused on his first school day speech that was only said after 3 days of the school's opening.

Mr. Gregory cleared his throat.

Ahem. Ahem.

"As you may know; this is the first assembly of the year. Many new experiences have yet to arrive, but are waiting desperately for you. I know that plenty of students have just come to the school. New ones, I'm referring to",

"So, I'd like to say…",

"Welcome to this school!",

"Whether be a new branch or not, everything will be new to you! New friends, new discoveries, new memories to be made! Most of all, however, are the studies! More studies!". Mr. Gregory's speech got cut off by a student.

It was a fairly foreign student who asked. He was apparently from Class 3.

"Mr. Gregory, sir, who are you?", he asked in a strange accent.

Mr. Gregory's smile got wider.

"Glad you asked!", he exclaimed.

“As you may know; I’m Mr. Gregory. I’m the head-teacher of this school. Yes! This whole school! Not only the grade.”,

“Head-teachers were dependent on grades much before, but the rule got changed recently”,

“So yes! I make up every little decision in this school. From the arrangement of your classrooms, to the class’s students, to your exams. I handle everything! I know I may look intimidating, but please! Don’t be shy to ask me for any inquiry! I’d love to help”.

Mr. Gregory made out a strange silence between him and the audience. The teachers had confused looks as Mr. Gregory was looking through a paper. Everyone was waiting for a cue, until the silence was broken.

“All of you are priceless children full of potential in the future”, Mr. Gregory suddenly said.

“Er—Excuse me for the sudden silence. I forgot my sentence there…”, he sighed.

“Anyhow—uh—don’t disappoint me! If you do, then… the worst punishments will occur”,

“Don’t worry, though! It’s not anything violent! Not like that!”,

“Otherwise, have a fantastic year. Oh yes! And enjoy our little performance made from your lovely teachers”, Mr. Gregory said. The students clapped, though some of them were having sneaking suspicions of Mr. Gregory. He wasn’t even the head-teacher of last year. Strangely enough, the day goes along as usual. The play started with teachers dancing to a pop song from Korea.

Chapter 2

French

After the performance, everyone got back to their usual classes. The first class was French. Yes. The school includes French as one of the many subjects! Strangely enough, there were no Spanish classes despite the enormous amount of Spanish and Latinos living in New York.

Before the French class starts, Mrs. Garcia takes the attendance of her fairly chaotic class. Everyone was rushing and running to take their books out of their respective lockers, that Garcia thought that some students were absent!

“Are you all ready for class?”, Garcia asked with a smile.

The students weren’t the same, however. Their faces were filled with boredom and tiredness.

“Doesn’t seem like it…”, she sighed.

“Well, French is the next class if you don’t know!”, she followed up.

The students lighten up, but not in joy, rather in shock. They’ve never even studied French prior to this year.

“Why?!”, Carly exclaimed. Garcia smiled as she saw her students finally energized at 8 in the morning.

“Because you’ve all grown up, thus you should learn a new language for once. As an English teacher, I personally think this’ll benefit your future immensely”, Garcia said.

Utter silence emerged. It seems like none of the students were interested in even learning another language. In the words of foreigners: This is the behavior of typical Americans.

“Oh right! Did you know I’m best friends with the teacher?”, Garcia said.

Silence again.

“Did you kn—“.

Another teacher came through the open door!

It was… the French teacher—Sylvia!

“Bonjour!”, Sylvia greeted.

The student’s jaws dropped.

“As I was saying…”, Garcia chuckled. “I’m from France!”, Garcia said.

The student’s jaws dropped more! That seemed impossible, but it’s true!

“Ah mwa! Yes!”, Sylvia affirmed.

“How? You’re the English teacher!”, Riley exclaimed. Garcia had a snide grin. “That’s why I became the English teacher. To hone my English skills”.

The blonde lady cleared her throat and walked her way out of the door, not even saying a goodbye. The students were left… amused.

“Ah, at least tou’s got me!”, Sylvia said in a comforting voice.

The lady looked like a stereotypical European. Tall and white, long and blonde, shining hair, having blue eyes and a fancy white coat matched with a light pink sweater on the inside. She’d look like the type of lady to wear a beret and eat cereal as snacks.

“So, what do tou want to do?”, Sylvia asked in her signature accent. The students were silent though. It’s as if they didn’t want to study at all—which is expected for such children.

“Toss paint into the other classes?”, Mandy snickered. Her partner, Maverick, started to fall in laughter.

Khe khe khe khe! His laugh went!

Sylvia wasn’t into this. As a teacher, this behavior is seen as extremely disrespectful. Maybe even seen as lawless behavior in the school’s eyes.

“It’s not April Fool’s Day, mi amie!”, Sylvia yelled.

Maverick’s burst of laughter turned back to silence. However, the other students didn’t follow suite. They were fairly close to laughing with the pair, including the quiet Alex.

“Hush it, students!”. Sylvia’s shout was so loud—it could be heard from the other classes!

Silence followed.

Sylvia led out a deep sigh of relief. Her expression somehow went to a smile. Has she even remembered what just happened?

Sylvia took out a book from under the teacher's desk and only saw piles upon piles of English-related books and papers. Where was the French? Oh! She found it!

It was… under?

That didn't matter much. Sylvia continued her studying ways until Riley blurted out something.

"Ms. Sylvia! There's something that Mrs. Garcia didn't do!".

Sylvia paid close attention and took a few—maybe more—steps towards the brown-haired boy. She noticed the book he was holding. It was for class attendance!

It looks like Garcia forgot! Sylvia thought about it. She snapped the book out of Riley and took her seat, looking through it.

"Let's take le attendance!", Sylvia said.

The students were relieved. Finally, changing the subject! Quite literally, too.

Chapter 3

Attendance

Sylvia saw the list of students and pondered over their names. Some sounded familiar thanks to Mrs. Garcia's constant talking about them, while others were the opposite.

"Bella Johnson?"

"Present!"

"Alex Wilson?"

"Here."

"Carly Cherry?"

"Present!"

"Casper Frost?"

"Present…"

It kept going on… and on…

And on! Until…

"Renard Fox?"

"…"

Silence.

"Renard Fox. I repeat, Renard Fox, are tou present?", Sylvia asked.

Silence yet again.

The students looked around aimlessly. They could've sworn Renard was there! It's not like he went to the bathroom either.

The class turned to Max, since he was sitting beside Renard since the start of the school year.

"Max? When was the last time you saw Renard?", Spencer asked. Max was processing what was asked.

Tick!

The processing was over! His memories came back to him. "Ah, Renard Fox! He was last seen… during the assembly".

Indeed. That was true. However, Max wasn't even close to Renard, not one bit. In the school, every line formation is the same, and it seems like they have formed a line a couple days ago.

"So. Who was near Renard?". Nobody answered. Sylvia sighed loudly.

What happened? What happened to the tiny but cunning trickster?

A question in Alex's head is how nobody noticed whatever happened to Renard.

Renard is the student who'd always come first, while Alex is always the second. So, the two of them would usually have a conversation in the morning. Strangely enough, Alex saw Renard in the morning. They were talking about spaceships built by poor men—or something along those lines.

Alex stood up and told the teacher about this fact.

Ms. Sylvia's face was in terror. What happened if that's true? Did Renard run out of school? Kidnapped? Black-mailed into doing something? Maybe even killed?

Who knew?

Who really knew at that point?

“Maybe Mr. s will know! I always see him in the halls. Maybe he’d see Renard running off somewhere!”, Sheldon suggested. Ms. Sylvia nodded.

“Mwa! Yes! Garcia’s daughter—“. Sylvia got cut off!

“It’s Carly, ma’am”, Carly corrected. Sylvia chuckled. “Yes! Please ask Munz about Renard. Sarah too!”.

Sarah huffed; so did Carly. They were so selfish that they didn’t even care that Renard disappeared nor cared if he was hurt!

“Why should that even matter?”, Sarah asked. She crossed her arms, looking annoyed.

“True. I mean, Renard could really just be absent and Alex’s lying”, Carly said.

Bruno took that in offense for Alex. “Hey! He’s not a liar!”, Bruno yelled. “And there’s no proof against Renard going missing. Ask any of the teachers—trust me. He was there during the assembly”, Alex assured everyone.

Meanwhile, Max was furious about what Sarah said. It was most offensive to Max because he was extremely close to Renard. Renard could understand all of Max’s struggles, even if he was strange.

“Shut up! His disappearance does matter! Just… Just because he’s not your friend doesn’t mean he doesn’t matter!”, Max shouted. The girls were intimidated! They know Max well. They know how violent he can get when he’s mad!

“Eek!”, the girls squealed! They sounded like little hamsters running away from a huge ball!

Ms. Sylvia raised two of her fairly bushy eyebrows at the girls. “So?”, she asked. The girls gulped and forcefully nodded to asking Munz. They stomped out of the door in rage. They couldn’t stand being questioned!

The two approaches the hangry Mr. Munz.

He was huge, like, really **huge**! He was also chubby and had tiny eyes. It looked like he couldn’t even see anything beneath him! He loves to eat, too. All he does is eat, teach and sleep. It’s a frank coincidence that he’s the baking teacher.

“Aye! Mr. Munz!”, Sarah roared. Mr. Munz turned his enormous head to the tiny girls. They were the size of dolls compared to Munz! “Hm?”, he snorted. “Have you seen Renard anywhere?”, Carly asked.

Munz was thinking. Thinking, thinking, thinking.

“Who is Renard?”, Munz asked.

Oof!

It seems like food really is a factor in intelligence!

“You know!”, Sarah yelled with her raging energy, “The boy with the black shirt and black jeans? The one with that stupid anime hair? The trickster that pranks everyone in the school at some point!?”.

Munz was trying to process whatever Sarah said. It was nonsense to him.

“Ah! Renard Fox! From your class. Hm”, Munz remembered!

Sarah and Carly sighed of relief.

“Ohhh. I didn’t see him in this hall specifically, but I saw him outside the floor”, Munz said. The girl’s faces glowed up. “Really?”, Carly asked. Really, though, they were only excited just to run away from this situation earlier.

“Yes. It was after the assembly. He was walking with… err… who was that boy…”. Munz was trying his best to remember. “Ah! Tadashi!”.

The girls were confused. “Who the heck is Tadashi?”, Carly asked. It’s strange that she asked that, as she knows everyone in the school. Even the little kids she knew!

“Tadashi is… he’s a student who left the school. I have no clue how he’s with Renard”.

Everyone had horrified faces. This must be something suspicious and dangerous! It was so horrifying that Carly and Sarah got concerned for one of their classmates’ well-being.

“Thanks for telling us, Mr. Munz”, Carly thanked Munz. The man smiled. “That’s what teachers are for!”, Munz said. The girls walked back to class with whatever was that in their mind.

When they walked back to class, Carly bumped into Bruno, who was apparently walking to the bathroom. “Ow!”, the two yelped. “Hey! Watch where you’re going!”, Carly yelled. Bruno didn’t like that. He pretended to ignore what Carly said anyways, trotting his way to the bathroom.

“What a jerk!”, Sarah yelled. “I know, but we can’t do anything about him”, Carly whispered to Sarah. Carly was clearly upset by that short interaction. That’s just the way she is.

Bruno was taking his way to the bathroom. It was “urgent” for him—whatever that means. Right before his eyes, he almost bumped his way into a girl!

“AH!”.

Gee! I really need to take Carly’s advice! Bruno thought.

The girl shrugged it off before noticing something. “Bruno, is that you?”, the girl asked. Bruno took notice of her quickly after. It seems his urgent business has been stopped!

The girl, who was dressed in a frilly pink skirt, looked both mad and upset about something. What was it that she was upset about? A broken pencil? A dumb debate at class? Some troublemaker classmates? A break-up? Well, the latter seems to be the case.

“IT’S YOU!”, the girl yelled! *Yeesh! She sure is loud!* Bruno thought.

“… Do I know you?”, Bruno asked.

“Ahem? I’m Claire”, the girl cleared her throat. Bruno gulped his throat down and bit his tongue for a quick second. His pupils were as small as a pea, and his skin was crawling. He remembered everything!

Bruno had a rough history with this girl.

“So, you’re **the** Claire, huh”, Bruno said. He got his breath ready for another sentence. “And you’re the one who got away!”, Claire shouted, cutting off Bruno. Bruno was obviously embarrassed by this. They may have been broken-up partners, but that doesn’t warrant any eavesdropper being involved in this situation! They were lucky everyone was having their classes now.

“Wh-What are you doing out of class anyways?”, Bruno asked. Claire seemed to be too mad to even listen to what Bruno said. She silenced him in her mind. “The real question is what are **you** doing out here?!”, Claire asked, pointing her index finger at Bruno. She looked like she was making a point for a court case. “I’m just going to the bathroom!”, Bruno stammered, his hands shaking as he spoke. His arms were lifted in the air afterward. He had a cowardly look on his face.

Claire folded her arms and looked away from Bruno. “Fine. Do whatever you want to do, rude boy”. However, Claire was talking to nothing! Bruno already ran to the bathroom, as it was “urgent”, according to him. Claire was stunned and mad! She thought she’d continue her manipulation tactics—which might be why they broke up.

“BRUNO!”, she yelled. Her class door was opened, revealing her furious classmates. They thought she was going to the bathroom herself! “How many times did I have to say this…”, the teacher sighed. Claire was trying her best to look innocent. Of course, that doesn’t work!

Chapter 4

The Mystery

Everyone's anxieties died down during the period. They had to continue the lesson: Nobody had a choice after all.

"Have a nice day, mi amie!", Sylvia said. She walked out of the classroom in an odd but fancy way.

The students waved goodbye as she left.

Everyone was enjoying their food and their time together because they have a short break after the first lesson. Strangely enough, though, Bruno—and Renard to a certain extent—were gone. It was a fairly long time since Bruno left, as Bruno left for the bathroom halfway the lesson.

"Where is Bruno?", Alex asked to himself.

Suddenly, the lights flicker.

Some of the girls were squealing, while the other students weren't frightened by a bit.

The lights were flickering for a while.

Flicker, flicker, flicker.

It kept going on and on.

Flicker… and flicker!

There the lights went!

The students were screaming for their lives!

A ghost! A ghost might've taken the lives of Bruno and Renard! It was an odd conclusion to jump into—but the children were irrational at the time!

After some time, the students stopped. No teacher or staff member even came to their aid! One of the students, Sheldon, take out their trusty flashlight.

"Don't worry, guys! I've got this thing!", Sheldon assured everyone.

The door open.

Creeeeaaaak~.

"Oh! Finally!", a voice spurred out.

It was Bruno!

"Bruno!", everyone shouted in joy.

"Where were you?!", Nadia exclaimed.

"I was looking for the class—what happened?", Bruno asked.

The students were silent as they have no clue about the lights. It might've been a power outage—but the other classes don't seem to experience the same problem. A ghost? But ghosts aren't really real!

Khe, khe, khe!

A familiar laugh?

Khe, khe…

Who was that?

The students got their stances ready. It must be the cause of the light's disappearance! Bruno, being the typical child that he is, wasn't prepared for what's about to happen to him.

The crackling laughter turned into maniacal laughter! A laughter full of devilish intent!

For a moment, the lights flicker to brightness—it revealed…

Renard!

"Renard!", everyone yelled in unison. Bruno screamed as the lights burn out. Slashing was occurring. The only source of light was Sheldon's trusty flashlight.

"Help!", Bruno shouted.

"Bruno! Bruno, can you hear us!?", Sheldon shouted.

Silence roamed. Wasn't Bruno just there?

Khe, khe, khe.

The laughter opened the lights, which revealed a fainted Bruno.

"Bruno!", everyone cried.

They were horrified to find the sight! They then gazed upon the psychotic-looking Renard. He looked different. He had his typical black shirt, but with a red pattern now. His eyes were bloody red and widened up. His hair was like a psychopath's. He strangely had no blood upon his skin and attire.

“Renard! What happened to you!?”, Spencer yelled.

Renard’s laugh wasn’t a normal mischievous laugh anymore… It was… odd.

“Oh, I’m not Renard”, Renard’s deep voice said.

Maverick wasn’t taking in any of this—neither was Mandy.

“Renard! Snap out of this! This isn’t even a funny prank!”, Maverick suggested. Renard’s snide smile turned into a daunting frown. Mandy’s face wasn’t so bright. She turned uncomfortable. “Maverick, I don’t think this is a joke”, Mandy tapped his shoulder.

Maverick realized what was really going on. “Erk!”, he squealed.

“What happened to Renard?!”, Max asked.

“He’s gone”, Renard answered. His tone was dark when he said that. This was no joke after all!

Riley couldn’t take it anymore, unlike his classmates. “Then… Then I’ll find the real Renard!”.

Renard’s face turned into a smile again. “Then good luck fighting me”.

Riley got his fists ready for a supposed battle with Renard. “Fine! I’ll do whatever it takes to save whoever I know and love!”.

“Even if you hate them? What a pathetic being! You’re just like that spiky-haired boy over there”, Renard laughed.

Bruno opened his eyes. “Riley… don’t… fight him…”, Bruno slowly said. He was badly injured. “I… can’t believe it… I got badly injured in the first week of school…”.

The students were ready for action once Bruno truly fainted!

Riley ran to Renard—anime style.

As soon as Riley reached Renard, however, Renard got his body ready for something.

“Bye…!”.

Renard turned back and threw a bomb. The class screamed as it exploded. Thankfully, it was a fake bomb! It emitted smoke that coughed up the students.

“Where did he go?!”, Bella exclaimed. Everyone was looking around for the sneaky Renard, until Bruno woke up and saw Renard outside the door, seemingly fainted.

“R-Renard!”, Riley yelled. The other students noticed Renard on the ground. Perhaps he snapped back to reality once the smoke bombs exploded. Max walked up to Renard and picked him up—even if Renard is fairly top-heavy. To Max, Renard was as light as a feather.

“Stay here, everyone, and don’t forget to inform the teachers and staff members about this if they do check on us”, Max told everyone. He walked out of the door with Renard on his back, as if Max is giving Renard a piggy-back ride.

The other students took in Max’s command and stayed in class as he wished.

Chapter 5

Following Friend

Before all of this occurred, Renard was only in the assembly with his fellow classmates. After the assembly, the class went back to the classroom. However, Renard was and is a fairly slow boy. He couldn't even walk past a slow dog!

Because of this, Renard stopped in his tracks. He was left behind from all of his classmates and the other classes, too. Renard was confused where to go. He doesn't firm well when he's tired after all.

When Renard was about to reach his grade's floor, he met eyes with a familiar face.

Could it be?

Tadashi!

Tadashi was an old friend of Renard. It's a little odd, though. Tadashi left the school since last year. *Why would Tadashi be here?* Renard wondered.

Tadashi, the boy in a striped blue shirt wearing shorts, waved his arms at Renard.

"Renard!", Tadashi yelled. He tip-toed his way to Renard—slowly.

"What are you doing here?", Renard ask.

"It's complicated. I don't have a lot of time to explain! First things first: Let's get out of this floor", Tadashi said.

In the distance, Mr. Munz, a teacher of Renard, overheard all of this and took note of everything said just in case any question were raised about it. He took no action due to his laziness, however. He also wasn't qualified for dealing with this sort of deal.

With Tadashi's sandals and Renard's sneakers hitting the concrete, the young men were hiding in the playground.

"So, you're in another class now?", Renard asked.

Tadashi nodded to that question. It was an odd question, but Tadashi had to answer to it anyways.

"Well, I have to go now! My parents need me!", Tadashi said.

"Wait, don't you have classes now?", Renard asked.

Tadashi chuckled. "We have classes at night!", Tadashi said. Renard looked confused. A class at night? The schedule must be terrible for his old pal!

"Got to go anyways. Goodbye!", Tadashi waved goodbye. He ran out of the fence with his fiddly, puny arms and legs. He's what bullies call a "squirm".

Renard laughed it off and went to his class.

"Gee, I wonder if anyone even cares that I was gone", Renard sighed to himself, realizing the sad reality. His depressing breath turned to a shocked gasp as he heard a daunting and terrifying voice.

"Hello Renard Fox".

Renard turned his back just to see Mr. Gregory!

"Mr. Gregory! I—I!"

Renard wanted to explain himself—but it's too late! Gregory had his last straw with a running away student!

"How many times did I have to say this?", Gregory said as if Renard always ran away from class.

"I'm sorry, Gregory! I… I won't do this again, I swear!", Renard cried. Gregory didn't believe Renard one bit—he is a well-known trickster after all. This time, however, whatever Renard say isn't a part of a trick or a scummy prank. Renard sweated like it was summer in the Sahara Desert. Gregory's stare was as cold as ice, though: a complete 180 from Renard's feelings!

Luckily, Gregory was in a good mood, so he believed Renard and let him go. The boy smiled wide and ran away, but not before… something odd occurred to Renard. It didn't affect Renard's mood whatsoever, nor his physical appearance.

But it will take affect later on.

Chapter 6

Dark Dreams

While the boys were taking Renard, he was having odd dreams.

About what? Nobody knows. The only one who knows is Renard himself.

Yes, the black-shirted prankster. He was never even seen as some serious man, rather the opposite. It's odd. Maybe even creepy. Nonetheless, Renard still experiences those dreams.

This particular dream is dreaded in darkness. There wasn't even any light. Only utter darkness. Renard took a path across the pitch-black area. Everything was foreign to him. His shirt even made him blend with the black. His hair didn't make that fact any better.

It seems he is a world away from everyone else. Loneliness was all he felt at the time.

Suddenly, he saw a figure the same color as the dream. All he could see from the mysterious figure were its eyes. Its gouging, red eyes that made it look like its eyes were bleeding.

Renard jumped and humped, running away from the creature. It was paranormal to him.

He screamed and screamed and screamed.

Ran and ran and ran.

He kept on running.

It was a never-ending, adrenaline-rushing path.

The opposite tract eventually ended.

Renard's heart stopped as soon as he realized that the figure reached him.

It was over.

Zip.

Nothing for Renard meant more than his own life.

"What will he do?

What will **it** do?",

Renard's heart almost dropped to an abyss until…

"You're the one, aren't you?", a voice asked.

It was a disturbing voice. It was creaky and washed-out, but oh so creepy. It made Renard's skin crawl.

"Wh-What?", Renard shivered. He was shaking like it was the middle of December. His sight led him to find the true form of this… thing. It was spider-like. Its eight legs looked like it was ready to pounce at the poor little boy. Its head and torso, however, were those of a human. The features of the human ringed a bell for Renard.

"The voice…

The face…

Why do I feel like… I…

I know it?"

Renard's dream flashed out into reality. He gasped for air, trying to comprehend what occurred to him. Was it a sign? Was it something important?

“That shall do”, a familiar voice said.

Right before Renard’s eyes were his classmates. They were waiting in front of him alongside Mr. Gregory. Most smiled as Renard opened his eyes and finally touched the familiar floor.

Indeed, they were in the middle of the hallway. Beside Renard were lots of fruits and medicine provided by Mr. Gregory and the nurses.

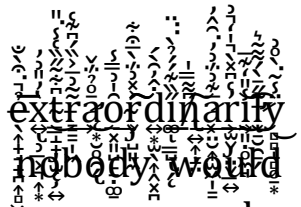
“Renard!”, the student yelled.

Renard finally woke up, realizing that this is reality and not part of the dream. He made a silly smile, but a sweet and soft one nonetheless.

“Boy! Am I glad to see you guys again!”, Renard chuckled in his signature tone.

“What happened to you?”, Bruno asked. Renard ignored Bruno’s question, though. He only saw Bruno’s injuries and half-covered eye. “What happened to **you**? You look rough”. Bruno made a fairly disgusted face, taking offense the last statement. “You beat me down”, Bruno answered, folding his arms and making out an angered grunt.

“What? I don’t—“.



Renard bit his tongue and remembered why. It was extraordinarily specific and odd. So much so that he believed that nobody would believe him. He is infamously known for spreading rumors as pranks after all. “Oh…”, he sighed.

Mr. Gregory took note of this.

He rubbed his chin that featured his never-shaved beard. His tired eyes turned into wide eyes and his neutral face turned into an interested one.

“You turned crazy? All of a sudden?”, Mr. Gregory asked. Renard freaked out for a moment. He seemed familiar to him—and not for what occurred in the morning!

“Y-Yes… I think”, Renard stuttered in feature. “Yes he did!”, Riley answered for Renard. Mr. Gregory turned his head left and right, just to stare into the children. “Why did you ask?”, Riley followed up. Mr. Gregory leaned his way down to Riley.

“It’s nothing much!”, Mr. Gregory smiled. The smile seemed fake. Really fake. The tall man walked his way out of the hallway—not even saying goodbye! The children were left speechless and confused, while Renard was afraid for his life.

Carly and Sarah—being them—shrugged that feeling off.

“Come on, guys!”, Carly grabbed the others’ attention. “Let’s get back to class before someone else gets killed!”.

Carly and Sarah strolled their way to the classroom. At least they said something before leaving, they thought.

The other students followed.

Chapter 7

Teacher Troubles

During the Math period, the students were calculating and solving some problems—as they should be.

"Students", a voice came out. It was a strong voice, almost having an Irish accent. "Please don't forget the homework I assigned you".

The voice was the teacher. He looked like your average Math teacher, with a hint of a tough body. The eyebrows were bushy and huge, so was his hair. It looks like a barber never even touched the hair! He also had a large, red beard. He goes by the name of Mr. Albert. Despite his tough exterior, he frequently goes through temper tantrums as if he's a 3 year old whining over their mother not buying them a toy!

The students thankfully didn't anger the teacher yet. Surprising since they're such troublemakers.

Mr. Albert was walking across the room, watching the student anxiously solving the math equations. It's only been a week, so the students were already used to Mr. Albert's oddities, including creepily watching the students going through their merry day.

Once Mr. Albert reached the dark corner of the class, he spotted the lonely-looking Renard. He was keeping his legs up on his table and listening to rock songs on his white headphones. His headphones were really the only way anyone could see the boy! The boy's hood

covered his shabby hair and he had a pale, blank face. Emotions weren't even present for him, only bitter sadness.

Right beside him was Max, who didn't mind Renard's bleakness and solved the questions himself. While Mr. Albert's attention was only brought to Renard, Max grabbed Mr. Albert's heart—soon his mind.

"Mr. Albert, sir!", Max called.

"Yes?", Mr. Albert leaned down. He tried to forget Renard for a moment.

"Is my answer correct?", Max asked. Mr. Albert looked into the answer, specifically looking into the logistics of it. "$9x^5$, I see. Clever boy!", Mr. Albert laughed under his beard. The man patted Max and requested him to answer the other questions for Max's sake.

"I will, sir!", Max smiled.

Mr. Albert got back into his original position, but not before peeping into Renard who didn't change at all. What felt like 10 minutes didn't seem to change Renard's attitude!

"Renard, my little man", Mr. Albert called out.

Renard took off his headphones, turning off his music on his program and twisted his head to the teacher. He had curious eyes and a small frown on his face.

"What is it?", Renard asked. "What's the matter?", Mr. Albert asked. Renard didn't believe that he heard. He folded his arms and turned himself away from the threatening teacher who just wanted to help him. "It's nothing", Renard huffed.

Mr. Albert sighed. Oddly enough, this is not the first time he dealt with children like Renard. People Renard's age do experience moody

times like him after all. However, Renard may be impacted by what happened earlier.

“Max. What happened to your dear friend?”, Mr. Albert asked.

Max wanted to ignore Mr. Albert’s question at first, but he gave in and had to answer or else he had to deal with Mr. Albert’s fury.

Without looking at the man, Max said “He’s dealing with something serious at the moment”.

“Something serious? Like what, hmm?”, Mr. Albert asked.

Max sweated. He didn’t want to answer more questions! Thankfully, the other students answered—specifically Sheldon.

“Oh, he had to fight someone in school!”, Sheldon lied.

Bam!

Spencer slapped Sheldon with his pencil-case!

“No, no, no!”, Spencer yelled. Sheldon covered his head with his soft hands. Looking mad, Sheldon turned red and death stared at Spencer. “Why did you do that?!”, Sheldon yelled back.

“Because Renard had to fight something in his dreams! He fought with us too!”, Spencer corrected.

Mr. Albert didn’t take in any of the student’s silly antics!

“Stop beating each other over such unnecessary things!”, Mr. Albert yelled.

The partners didn’t care and continued their work, not looking at each other. Mr. Albert sighed. He still believed whatever the boys said.

Suddenly, a man in a black jumpsuit came up to the door.

“Renard Fox, your parents are here to pick you up”, the man called.

Renard jumped up from his seat and smiled. Seems like the boy took a 180 turn from his attitude! He packed his bag, not even trying to slow down.

“Ah, so he’s going home, hm?”, Mr. Albert said as he took the paper, signing it.

“Yes, sir. Mr. Gregory called his parents for emotional support”, the man explained. Mr. Albert stopped signing to look at the man like he’s a maniac. The math teacher was utterly confused by then.

“But why?”, Mr. Albert asked.

“Haven’t you heard? Renard attacked his classmates suddenly. Nobody has an explanation of how or why he did. Mr. Gregory did know but he didn’t want us to press on the details”, the man explained further.

Mr. Albert finally realized what was going on, though he didn’t know why Renard suddenly acted the way he did either.

“Didn’t a teacher bear witness to that?”, Mr. Albert asked.

“I don’t think so”, the man answered. Renard walked up the door, taking the tiny paper that contained information. The man walked out of the door, trying to avoid the once-ravaging boy.

“Was that true?”, Mr. Albert asked Renard. The boy shivered. He didn’t even want to talk about what happened earlier that day. He only wanted to get over it. “Erm… well…”, Renard sweated.

The boy looked side to side, then smiled and waved.

“Bye bye!”. He dashed away from the classroom. He’s quite literally running away from his problems!

Mr. Albert sighed. How could he ever confront that boy? He turned to the other students and decided to continue was he was doing earlier—teaching the students.

His concerns were still present.

The End